



# GSL ONLINE

Montana's premiere student loan publication

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- *MGSLP Financial Aid Retreat/  
SLAC Semi-Annual Meeting:  
Dec. 1, Bozeman*
- *Christmas Eve Day:  
Dec. 24 (Office Closed)*

## A SPECIAL THANKS...



After 14 years of working for the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, Patty Davis has announced that she will no

longer serve as the Director of Operations for the Montana Guaranteed Student Loan Program. Patty was a great asset to our agency and she will be missed on a professional and a personal level. From all of us at MGSLP, we want to thank Patty for her hard work and dedication, and we wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

## THE DIRECTOR'S DEN - REAUTHORIZATION

Although our newsletter is bi-monthly, it feels like much has happened since our last publication. One very important event was the Presidential election. While this is not intended to be a partisan statement, the fact that Republicans hold the majority in all three houses should make for a smoother Reauthorization process. We may disagree with the ultimate results of Reauthorization, but the transitional issues that pop up when there is a change of power should be minimized. Many folks, including me, predicted that Reauthorization would not happen until 2006. Now it appears likely that Congress will tackle Reauthorization in 2005.

Here in Montana, I've been working with the Shared Leadership Steering Committee on access and affordability. Our group (which includes Brandi Payne, Arlene Williams, and Kris Dramstad - amongst others) is working to improve need-based aid and to empower our youth to think about and prepare for a post-secondary education. If all goes well, we should have a set of recommendations that our Steering Committee will present to the Board of Regents and, ultimately, the legislature.

Finally, for those of you who weren't able to attend our recent Financial Aid Directors' Retreat, I'm excited to announce a couple of changes at MGSLP. The first is the promotion of our very own Karen Wing to the position of Deputy Director. In her new role, Karen will directly oversee all operational units within the agency. The final change is the introduction of a new position at GSL: Director of Business Relations and Programs. While Client Services remains committed to ensuring outstanding service in the area of new loan guarantees, this new unit is responsible for the care of our various schools, lenders, and other business partners (both current and potential) after the loan has been guaranteed. We are currently recruiting to fill this position and hope to name the successful candidate in the very near future.

*Bruce Marks, Director*

## MGSLP UPGRADES MPN PROCESSING

As part of our continuing effort to provide our customers with top-notch service, MGSLP will upgrade to our new User Interface (UI) subsystem, a complement to the GOALS processing system, on December 6th. The UI is a web-based processing system that will be used by our loan processors and customer service areas within Client Services. The UI is similar in look and feel to ScholarNet, a product used by MGSLP clients. The new integration will provide staff with a faster, more efficient processor, and the ability to access loan information in a more user-friendly fashion.

## NEW FACES, PROMOTIONS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Meet Leah Habel, the new financial aid director at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology. Leah began in financial aid more than 11 years ago as a work-study student at Carroll College. Before moving to the College of Technology six months ago, she worked for the University of Great Falls for 7 years. "The most rewarding part of my job is helping students with special conditions and extenuating circumstances."

Leah is mom to two boys, Keaton, 4 years, and Brady, 10 months. She and her husband Pat enjoy taking the boys on camping trips, especially roasting marshmallows around the campfire, fishing and hiking. In her spare time she enjoys working in her herb garden, reading and playing the piano. "I play the piano at about a sixth grade level. Luckily my kids love the songs!"

**Favorite Quote:** "Always fall in with what you're asked to accept. Take what's given, and make it over your way. My aim in life has always been to hold my own with whatever's going. Not against: with."

-Robert Frost